

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Official Action mailed March 2, 2007. Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-6, 8-13 and 15-22 remain currently pending in the present application. The following sets forth Applicants' remarks relating to the outstanding Action and the currently pending claims.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as their invention. In particular, the Examiner noted insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said bearing mechanism" in claim 15. This rejection has been addressed by the deletion of the term "mechanism" in such claim. Further, the Examiner objected to claim 1 because of certain typographical errors in such claim. Applicants also respectfully submit that such objections have been addressed in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

The Examiner has indicated in the outstanding Action that claims 15-22 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Action. As discussed above, independent claim 15 has been amended herein in order to overcome such § 112 rejection. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 15-22. As will be discussed further below, the remaining independent claims have been amended so that they include similar subject matter to that of claim 15.

Further in the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-10, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,001,433 to Songer et al. ("Songer"). In particular, the Examiner cited the embodiment shown in FIGS 6A-6F and 7A-7C of Songer as teaching the subject

matter claimed in independent claims 1 and 8. In the present Amendment, independent claims 1 and 8 have amended to require that the bearing mechanism include a semi-spherical bearing and a pair of retaining caps where the pair of retaining caps are designed so that one is insertable into the other. There is simply no teaching in the Songer reference of these limitations, and this is further evidenced by the fact that the Examiner did not reject above-discussed independent claim 15 in view of Songer. Thus, Applicants respectfully request removal of the § 102(e) rejections in view of Songer.

Still further in the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0259149 to Navarro et al. ("Navarro"). For similar reasons as are stated above in connection with Songer, Navarro likewise does not anticipate either independent claim 1 or independent claim 8, as such reference does not teach certain of the newly added limitations those claims. There is simply no teaching in Navarro of the above-discussed pair of retaining caps and their cooperation with one another.

Finally, in the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-10, and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0117021 to Biedermann et al. ("Biedermann"). Once again, similar to the above-discussed cited prior art references, the Biedermann reference also does not disclose a core bearing element having first and second bores of different diameters, nor does it disclose retaining caps having compression locking posts at different diameters that fit within the differently sized bores of the bearing. As such, Applicants also respectfully request removal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) of independent claims 1 and 8 in view of Biedermann.

Although the above discussion does not give specific reasons for the allowability of each of dependent claims 2-6 and 9-13, Applicants respectfully submit that such claims are also allowable based solely upon their proper dependence from either independent claim 1 or independent claim 8, which as discussed above, are now in allowable form. A dependent claim is necessarily narrower than an independent claim from which it properly depends.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Office Action have been fully met, allowance of each and every one of the currently pending claims is earnestly solicited.

If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that she telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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